

April 23, 2002. As stated in the attached Declaration of the sole inventor, Takahiro Saito, the claimed invention of the present application was conceived by Mr. Takahiro Saito as early as November 6, 1997. The attached Exhibit A is a copy of disclosure of Mr. Saito's invention dated November 6, 1997 and prepared by Tetsuo Wada of Ehara Patent Office. For the Examiner's convenience, applicant also enclosed herewith a true English translation of Exhibit A (labeled as Exhibit B). The disclosure of November 6, 1997 fully supports all pending claims 6-14. Therefore, Takahiro Saito conceived the claimed invention of the present application before the 102(e) date of Ackley.

The present application is a division of U.S. patent application No. 10/424,650 filed on April 25, 2003, which claims the priority benefit of U.S. patent application No. 09/729,414 filed on December 4, 2000, which in turn claims the priority benefit of U.S. provisional application No. 60/170,815 filed on December 15, 1999. A review of the files shows that pending claims 6-14 of the present application are fully supported by the provisional application No. 60/170,815. Therefore, diligence is required only between just prior to October 18, 1999 (the 102(e) date of Ackley) and December 15, 1999 (the filing date of provisional application No. 60/170,815). As stated in the Declaration of Takahiro Saito, during the period of time from just before October 18, 1999 to December 15, 1999, Mr. Saito has been working with Mr. Tetsuo Wada of Ehara Patent Office to modify and finalize the specification for the base U.S. provisional application No. 60/170,815. Mr. Saito exchanged opinions with Mr. Wada and modified the specification numerous times during that period of time, while both Mr. Saito and Mr. Wada fulfilled other work-related duties. Exhibit C is a draft specification dated December 10, 1999, which is a modified version of the disclosure shown in Exhibit A and was finished five days before filing the provisional application No. 60/170,815. As shown and evidenced above, Mr. Saito and his patent attorney(s) had worked on the present invention with due diligence from just before October 18, 1999 (the 102(e) date of Ackley) to December 15, 1999 (the date of constructive reduction to practice).

For the reasons discussed above, Examiner is respectfully requested to remove the Ackley reference. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claim Rejections- 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 9-14 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ackley in view

of Yoshinaga et al. (US 6,073,842).

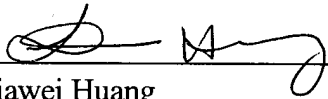
For the reasons discussed above, Acklye should be removed, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the rejections have been addressed. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Respectively submitted

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Jiawei Huang
Registration No. 43,330

J.C. Patents
4 Venture, Suite 250
Irvine, CA 92618
Tel.: (949) 660-0761